



Peter Guria

10/27/2004 10:01 AM

To: Jeff Inglis/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Michael
Montgomery/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Andrew
Bain/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
cc: Daniel Meer/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
Subject: Fw: Bluewater Visit

OSC Yocum's trip report on Bluewater. She doesn't feel that the sites pose threats for removal program involvement, and feels this is something AML can address. Question remains, can they - and how do we get them the \$\$\$.

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----- Forwarded by Peter Guria/R9/USEPA/US on 10/27/2004 09:59 AM -----



Janet Yocum

10/27/2004 04:31 AM

To: Peter Guria/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Rich Martyn/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
cc:
Subject: Bluewater Visit

Pete/Rich:

I thought I had sent an email to you earlier today about the bluewater site, and when I returned tonight from Speedy's, I saw the memo didn't get sent, and so I will try to recreate it.

The site that we visited was the Brown-Vandever mine site, one of three sites that comprise the "Bluewater" site. This site was the one that Rob Bornstein previously addressed. We visited the site with Arlene Luther, Lily (a NNEPA PIO and translator) and two NNSuperfund persons. There were 5 subsidence areas that we observed (photos appear below) that ranged in size from 1 x 1 ft to 6 x 6 ft. The subsidence area that Keith was taken to was the first place that we looked at and it had been filled in. No one was able to tell me who and when that occurred.

We established background at 6-8 microR approximately 1 mile from the site and at a restaurant parking lot in Grants (where we met NNEPA folks). At all the subsidence areas, gamma surveys of a child's breathing zone (waist high) indicated background levels.

At the edge of subsidence area 1, we detected approximately 60 microR on the surface and background at ground level. At waist high, we were at background. We lowered the MircoR into the pit and detected about 300 microR. Note, this particular hole was filled with rocks.

At the other subsidence areas: waist high=background; at surface, near subsidence= background to 60 microR; within subsidence areas (0 tp -2 ft. bgs)=background to 300 microR.

I talked to arlene about what these values meant. There was obviously radiation at the site, however, the risk to human health was minimal: someone would have to spend time actually inside the holes to be exposed to significant levels above background. With one exception: subsidence area 1. However, if you look at the photo, you will see it has been pretty much filled with rock. I told her I didn't think this site would rise to an "imminent and substantial" endangerment to human health and spent some time distinguishing this from the bornstein action. Rob Bornstein addressed shafts, adits and significant tailings piles in response to ATSDR's health advisory. That same level of risk doesn't exist at this site anymore. I asked whether AML could address it as an O&M issue. She was immediately resistant. Her position was that EPA did it before, they should do it now. I explained that we aren't in the business of doing O&M, that

we're emergency response, but that I was sure there were other programs either within EPA or NNEPA that could undertake this. She said Mr. Brown really wants something done here. I explained that I was sure he did, but that it wasn't something our shop should handle.

Mr. Brown spent the entire time we were out there telling us about this extensive network of tunnels subsurface. He contends that these subsidence areas developed over the tunnel voids. I asked whether there was any other access to these supposed tunnels (or maps of them) and was told Mr. Brown doesn't remember exact locations but he is sure the subsidence was related to tunnels.

Today while we were at Speedy's (and she was busy causing me even more grief with the Yellowhorses) we talked about it some more and she NOW feels that AML could handle the site, but its a matter of money. She seemed to understand and agree that it isn't an "emergency" response and she agreed to start dialog with her contact at AML (Roanhorse?) and we would conference call later next week about it. I mentioned that Michelle was using some kind of foam at Rinconada, and she said she had heard AML had used the same previously. Clearly, she wants \$\$\$. I told her that I would help her in whatever way I could, but I didn't see this bluewater site as something our shop should be involved in.

My connection here is very slow, so I will have to send the other pics in another email.



Previous Subsidence Area.jpg Subsidence Area 1.jpg

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